

# DATES & TICKET INFORMATION



## *New Chamber Opera: Friday Lunctime Recital Series*

*All Recitals are currently live-streamed only, see links at  
<https://www.newchamberopera.co.uk/>*

**Week 1      30 April**

Theo Nesbitt *with* Dónal McCann

**Week 2      7 May**

Maryam Wocial *with* Toby Stanford

**Week 3      14 May**

John Johnston *with* Dónal McCann

**Week 4      21 May**

Karol Jozwik *with* Jamie Andrews

**Week 5      28 May**

Emily Mustoe *with* Matthew Foster

**Week 6      4 June**

Filippo Turkheimer *with* Dónal McCann

**Week 7      11 June**

Will Prior *with* Will Harmer

**Week 8      18 June**

Elizabeth Vineall *with* Toby Stanford

## **The Summer Opera: Galuppi, *La Diavolessa* (*The She-Devil*)**

30 (Preview), 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 July 2021, The Warden's Garden, New College

June 30: Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/newchamberopera>

July 3: Tickets: New College Development Fund (01865) 279 337

July 6: Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/newchamberopera>

July 7: Tickets: Friends of the Oxford Botanic Gardens Mary Isaac 0776 224 1881 or Anne James 07756 882346

July 9: Tickets: New College Development Fund (01865) 279 337

July 10: Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/newchamberopera>

New Chamber Opera - New Chamber Opera Ensemble - The Band of Instruments - Phoenix - Cutting Edge

*Singing Patron* James Bowman *Director of Productions* Michael Burden *Director, the Summer Opera* Steven Devine *Director, The Band of Instruments* Roger Hamilton ·  
*Director, Opera Studio* Toby Stanford *Repetiteurs* Toby Stanford · *Company Secretary* Clare Atkinson *Comptroller* Graham Midgley · *Wardrobe* Diana Lintott, Fiona Hodges

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Web pages: <http://www.newchamberopera.co.uk> Company No 3402769 · Charity No 1095069



# ***The Summer Opera***

## ***The Evening's Events***

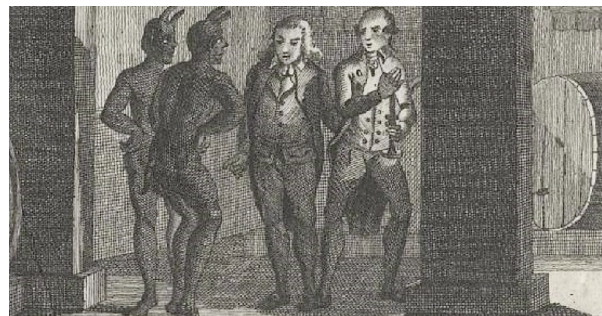
**6.00pm:** Drink in the Cloisters

**6.30pm:** Opera Part I, The Warden's Garden

Picnic Interval in the Cloisters (approximately 90 minutes)

**9.00pm:** Opera Part II, The Warden's Garden

**10.30pm:** Curtain



*Please note that the performances will take place under changing COVID-19 rules and restrictions. Currently the intention is to perform in the Warden's Garden if fine, and in a large open marquee if wet. The outside space of the Cloisters will be used for picnics in either case.*

# ***Galuppi: La Diavolessa***

The 'She-devil' of the opera is, of course, Dorina, the character who provides a focus for several characters' desires. The plot starts out sedately enough; Giannino and Dorina are in love, but Dorina has decided that because Giannino has no money, she will not marry him. Falco, the local innkeeper, suggests that they try a scam to rob the foolish – but wealthy – old Don Poppone. But now the plot descends into farce. Poppone believes there is treasure in his basement, and Giannino and Dorina pose as Turkish mystics to pretend to find it. When they arrive, Poppone mistakes the pair for the Roman Count Nastri and his wife the Countess, whom Poppone was also expecting; when the real noble couple arrives, they are mistaken for the announced Turks. CHAOS. Musically, the most important interesting number is the second finale,

**Conductor - Steven Devine**  
**Director - Michael Burden**  
*In a new English translation*  
*by Simon Rees*

Count Nastri  
**William Purefoy**  
The Countess, his wife  
**Rebecca Afonwy-Jones**  
Dorina, An Adventuress  
**Sophie Kidwell**  
Giannino young lover of Dorina  
**Dominic Bowe**  
Poppone Corbelli a gentleman  
**Tom Kennedy**  
Ghiandina housemaid  
**Kate Semmens**  
Falco innkeeper  
**Rory Carver**

which contains the séance; the score evokes mysterious and eerie powers. Galuppi and the librettist Carlo Goldoni, between them invented opera buffa as we know it today. The Venetian-born composer worked both as a writer of opera seria and then in the newly developed *dramma giocoso*. His music, in an attractive, mid-18th-century gallant style, was heard throughout Europe, and although he spent periods out of Venice – including a spell at the Italian Opera House in London – the city was the focus of his career. His music disappeared into obscurity, partly because Napoleon's invasion of Venice in 1797 resulted in Galuppi's manuscripts being scattered and, in many cases, lost or destroyed. *La Diavolessa*, which was premiered at the Teatro S Samuele in November 1755, however, did survive, and is among those works revived during the 20th century.

## **Mailing List**

**Mailing Lists.** Each hard copy and electronic mailing returns out of date addresses; it would be helpful if members of both mailing lists could keep their address up to date. Anyone who would like to join the electronic mailing list - used for reminders of forthcoming events - please let us know.

# *Singing on Livestream*



## *Maryam Wocial reflects...*

*What is the value of live performance? I have often asked myself this question over the past year. No doubt, my curiosity has been prompted by months of singing to a computer screen whilst praying that my computer won't lag or disconnect entirely from the singing teacher at the other end of the Zoom call. Live performances seem simpler, less stressful, more familiar. The chapels and concert halls around Oxford have been built for live performance. We have inherited so many traditions which support the practice of live music, and yet we also live in a time of technological innovation. As a music student, I feel an enormous pressure to preserve live performance whilst exploring the possibilities of digital performance. I wonder how can they be integrated; how can they coexist?*

*In the midst of all these questions, which are often more complex than they sound, I like to focus on physical experiences. Over the past year, I have performed two recitals for the NCO. During these live performances, I was particularly conscious of my interaction with the venue surrounding me and how my*

*vocal utterances were taken and transformed, clothed by the acoustic qualities of the walls which arched above me. Singing in New College Chapel has always been a surreal experience, but it wasn't until I had spent months singing in my acoustically dull bedroom that I truly appreciated the chapel as a collaborator in the performance process. I believe that performance venues elevate the voice inside and allow it to truly encompass the listener – something which can't be said for the small speakers on a phone or laptop.*

*Whilst the limitations of technological experiences are apparent, the audience engagement from my online recitals has surprised me. Although my first recital had a restricted audience of six people, the recording which I posted online accumulated over 1,000 views. Since this number exceeds the available audience space within the chapel, my performance reached the ears of more people than I could have hoped to reach within the live performance venue. Nonetheless, the small audience present during my live performance will have had a very different experience to those who watched me sing on their phones or*

*laptops. It's great to have a large audience, but I would want them to have the best quality experience of my performance. Undoubtedly, within the coming years, technology will improve and reach a standard which is increasingly competitive with the quality of the live experience. Such a future is exciting but also somewhat daunting, and I wonder how musicians will adjust to digital performance platforms.*

*Indeed, from my own perspective as a performer, I experienced my two recitals very differently. During my first recital, I was singing to a live audience, and I could engage with people who were present in the room whilst my camera recorded from the side. By contrast, I sang my second recital to a large camera which was fixed in front of me. I made an effort to adjust my movements and direct my singing towards the camera, but my actions couldn't be reciprocated. For me, therefore, the unique value of live performance lies within its facilitation of audience interaction, which I hope will be explored in more exciting and creative ways once performance venues can open their doors again.*

**Maryam Wocial**



# Laurence Cummings



Handel's *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* has been unduly overshadowed by its younger sibling, *Acis and Galatea* (London, 1718), which has held sway with British audiences since its inception. Perhaps this is because of the attractive figure of Polyphemus, whose 'Ruddier than the Cherry' provides an infectious – no, eminently – grumbling Ohrwurm; or that Handel's London *Acis* guaranteed its widespread dissemination in its setting of an English-language text. It might simply be that the London *Acis* is cuter, in which case it really would assume the chief characteristic of the younger sibling.

The 1708 *Aci*, however, has it all: fast-paced action; ensemble numbers; virtuosic recitative; and the full gamut of eighteenth-century aria types. For producers and directors, its distinct advantage is its length, with the running-time falling just short of 70 minutes – in other words, long enough for a short evening's musical entertainment, but



***Laurence Cummings, our Visiting Professor of Opera will be making a return in Michaelmas Term. In this extract here, Anhad Arora, the director of Handel's Aci, Galatea e Polifemo, reflects on the masterclass Laurence Cummings gave prior to our performances which took place on the eve of lockdown.***

also sufficiently wieldy to occupy the first half of a longer programme. Yet *Aci*'s most alluring features – the fast-paced action and recitative – are those that render interpretation difficult, and it was around these matters of interpretation that Laurence's masterclass was centred.

Prior to any interpretation of texted music, Laurence counselled, must come an interpretation of text. This interpretative strategy does not suggest considering the text within the music. That much is a given in sung performance. Rather, Laurence suggested that before tackling the braid of aria or recitative, performers should divorce the text from the music; they should declaim, analyse and unfold its shapes, inflections and modulations as poetry independent of musical content. Text is and always remains a vital entity in the musical whole; it is one of music's 'shaping organs', to misquote Wagner, regardless of whether it precedes music. This 'textual' strategy is also the closest we could conceivably come to a compositional retracing of steps. Handel examined text. Why shouldn't we?